

# GOVERNMENT AS MAFIA

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## 1: GOVERNMENT AS MAFIA

Every ambitious prosecutor who wants to run for Congress, every lusty-after-fame attorney general who wants to make a name for him self, and every mayor or governor who's failing at just about everything and wants to retrieve the situation - all these worthies have something in common: they know that a good way to get what they want is to "declare war" on organized crime. The people will be stirred up, the headlines will flow, and power and glory will come to the man in charge of the war. My point here is not to argue against battling organized crime; rather, it's to state what to believers in liberty ought to be obvious: for the *government* to go around campaigning against the mob is a little like Vito Genovese saying evil things about Carlo Gambino, since all the reasons given us for hating the Mafia apply even better to the government. That's a sad thing to say, and here's an even sadder one: the government does mob-type things on such a gigantic scale that in comparison it's hardly possible even to take syndicate people seriously as criminals.

The major reasons ladder-climbing politicians give us for going out and smiting the mob are two: one relates to what that organization does, and the other to how it does it.

The first thing our friendly hack down the block tells us is that the Syndicate is eminently hatable because it's a band of merry thieves who prey upon the rest of us, who steal seven billion or a 100 zillion each year (no one knows how much, of course, but the pols need some figure to tell gullible reporters and headline-writers), and who do more nebulous things like "drain the economy" or "victimize society". Without denying for a moment that the mob is comprised mainly of people who steal things for a living, all people of honor and good sense should nonetheless laugh hysterically whenever any politician complains about that fact. For, in view of today's grotesquely overgrown governmental behemoth, what other than theft occupies 90% of the government's time and effort?

Excluding protecting people from aggressive other people (that is, doing for people what they *could* legitimately do themselves), the activities of our superstate all involve taking money from people who have earned it and spending it for illegitimate purposes (meaning for things for which people may *not* choose to hire the state, because the function involved is not one they could legitimately do themselves, like seizing money from Neighbor A to give to Neighbor B because the latter "needs" it more). Such extorted money is used to provide welfare payments to some state-favored groups and to provide education/indoctrination to other groups, and to prop up certain failing state-supported corporations. The exact purpose for which the seized money is spent doesn't matter one bit, in moral terms, once prevention and punishment of aggression is passed; it might be of some purely academic interest who gets the money, but only in the same way that we're interested in who receives any stolen property - what matters is that the money *is* stolen. Just as the mob's way of life requires the same thing. We're offended by the fact that the Mafia goes out each night and loots "X" amount of dollars from the community, but very few of us seem to be offended when the government goes out by day and does the same thing.

That's surprising and depressing enough, but what's even more so (on both counts) is that the government does incomparably more of this kind of

thing, and its victims represent an incomparably larger segment of the population. Taking my own estimate of the annual take of the nation's 24 organized crime "families" - 12 billion - as accurate, that would mean the Mafia drains about 1% of GNP into its coffers. That sounds like a lot of money, but the take of the government-mob makes it seem trivial. With the feds seizing more than \$300 billion per year and the states and localities an equal amount (roughly), the total government take is around half of GNP. If we concede that about a fifth of that gov-take goes for the legitimate (anti-aggression) functions of the state, that leaves roughly half a *trillion* dollars (500 billion or a little less) being seized each year by the government-mob. Now, really, with *that* gang of thieves stealing *that* amount of money from innocent people (who have committed no offense against *anyone*) every year, people like Sam Decavalcante have a lot of nerve even pretending to be mobsters.

I hate to press the comparison any further, for fear of embarrassing the Sam Giancarnes of the country (men who really think they are effective criminals), but look at the two mobs: the Mafia-mob has 5,000 actual members and maybe 30,000 associates who work for the members, and all these folk manage to steal perhaps 12 billion a year. The Government-mob not only steals 500 billion annually to do with as it sees fit, taking a gigantic cut for itself along the way, but also has a massive *presence* in every locality which any good syndicate man would envy. That's not surprising, since its tens of millions of mob-members make it relatively easy to blanket the country. There are so many of them, and they're so uniformly spread throughout the country, that the Gov-mob takes on an aura of invincible super-power which again any Mafia-mobster would love to have. A massive presence is the stuff of which successful intimidation is made, and neither one of the mobs could succeed at thievery if it lost its intimidatory power over us.

And my speaking of intimidation bring our tour of Gov-mob land to the second reason for hating the Mafiamob which applies equally well to the Govmob; *how* it goes about doing what it does. *What* both mobs do is loot all of us for reasons they think sufficient; the *way* they do it is by using violence and the threat of violence. The various spokesmen who tell us to beware the mob because they're a violent group prepared to use murder and mayhem, and the threat of it, to get what they want - these spokesmen of course are quite right. The problem is, they're usually government people, and they'd be well advised to apply the same analysis to themselves and their actions. North America is full of a lot of nonsense about the payment of taxes being "voluntary", but any perceptive six year old knows it's about as voluntary as turning over your hard-earned cash to a Mafiamob "protection" squad. It might look voluntary to some outside observer; but you know, and the mob knows, that you're giving them the amount of cash they're demanding because terrible things will happen to you or your property if you don't. And what of the Govmob? When they come to you each year demanding your money so that they can do with it as they wish, *why* do you give it to them? You do it because you know that if you don't, they will come and use violence against you to get it. That violence can take one of several forms. Armed thugs can come and seize your home or car to be auctioned off to get what the Govmob wants; *you* can be kid-



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napped and put in a cage for several years for doing nothing more than refusing to pay tribute to the Govmob; or, if you resist the armed thugs when they come to seize your property, you can, quite literally be killed in the process of defending that property. Naturally, the Govmob will do things as painlessly as possible, so that if it can steal your money by simply attaching your bank account, it will. But do not mistake the ultimate threat: if your resources are within your physical possession at home, and you decide (as you have every moral right to) to defend them against various criminals from the government), violence, up to and including lethal violence, will be used against you. If you were to defend your home and property against Mafia-mobsters, you would be called a hero and given a medal by the local Chief of Police; but if you defend your possessions against Gov-mobsters, you will be called a criminal and killed or caged for your efforts. For those who still doubt that the Govmod relies upon violence and the threat of it just as much as the Mafiamob, I suggest this: try

not paying the Govmobsters their money sometime and keep your resources at home so that they can't simply attach your bank account. Then see if you can draw any distinction between the terror which descends upon you and the kind which would hit you if you resisted a syndicate protection squad.

It's only because we've been indoctrinated for generations by the state into believing *that* the state can commit crimes of theft and violence without their *being* crimes that we've failed to see our bloated and predatory government for what it is: a criminal conspiracy which parallels the Mafia's criminal conspiracy both in what it does (stealing money from innocent victims) and in how it does it (using violence and threat of violence). The next time you hear some government hack warning of the dangers of organized crime, believe him, but then reflect upon who the *worst* organized criminals are.

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## 2: THE POLICE: THE BEST OF US AND THE WORST OF US

Scenario: It is midnight; or it is 2 a.m., or whatever time in the dark-of-the-night *you* think best represents the skulking time, and the time for the doing of evil deeds. The moon is down by now (or it was never up, the cloud-villains have moved in to cover the stars, and superdarkness crushes the community in the kind of smothering hug your Aunt Bertha used to give you. For children easily spooked and for nighttime hikers or canoeists who need some natural light, all this darkness is depressing/scary, but there are those who like it just fine.

They're criminals, and they're out there assaulting and stealing and killing. Their stealing is to support themselves and their friends and their superiors, and denude their enemies of resources; their assaults are carried out for the purposes of enforcing the theft or simply intimidating their enemies; and the dead-bodies are hitting the pavement (the killing is done) for the same reasons - in the course of stealing or to remove an enemy. This kind of thing keeps these people wonderfully busy all night, each night, and it's so productive that they live much better than honest citizens. Like the leeching vampires they are, they end their terrorism before daylight, and do their skulking in a homeward direction.

When that daylight comes, another group of people hits the streets, and they're just the opposite of the first. They investigate the crimes the criminals have committed, they track them, they capture them, and they hold them for prosecution and putting away. They spend the whole of their days and the whole of their lives risking getting (and getting) shot at and stabbed and pummeled and tromped, they use such violence as they use in an effort to *prevent* assaults and robberies and murders, they - to the extent they're good at their jobs - make it possible for honest people to live their lives without paying tribute to the criminals, and they're just as admired by those honest folk as the criminals are hated.

Now, there is only one thing wrong with these two scenarios; I lied when I said that "another" group of people begin to operate in the morning, for the good guys who are doing all the good things described above are the very *same* people who are doing all the evil deeds outlined earlier - and this two-groups-in-one aggregation can be labelled briefly: the police.

For reasons most of them don't understand, pro-liberty people in America in recent years have been ambivalent about the police - and by "police" I mean every bit of the broad law-enforcement apparatus, the beat cops and the plainclothes cops and the prosecutors and judges and the wardens and prison guards and probation officers (and I also mean to include every government level, so that FBI Agents and SEC investigators and Drug Enforcement Administration Agents and Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Bureau people, and all of their counterparts at the state-government level should be seen to be clearly cops as the local folk we usually think of when we hear the word "police".) Liberty-oriented women and men find it easy to know what to think about the leader of some "welfare rights" organization who asserts the right to steal the product of your labor, at gunpoint, and give it to someone else; that person is a professional criminal, and as such eminently hatable, and of course the fact that he hired the government's gunmen to do the stealing instead of hiring his own personal-gunman changes nothing. A criminal; hatable.

Similarly, there is no problem in knowing what to think about the reverse case: for instance, a homicide detective who spends twelve hours a day trying to catch murderers and put them away - either in the jail or under it. Not only is this man/woman (yes, there are a handful of women in that specialty) *committing* no crime, he/she is in fact taking risks to ensure that the crime-committing of *other* people will be minimized. A wonderful person, this person; eminently lovable.

Unfortunately for the peace of mind of liberty-folk, they find it impossible to conjure up *either* the rotten image described above *or* the good one, when they're thinking about the police. Most of them find it hard to be enthusiastically pro-police, yet they're just about as unlikely to be found in the arms of the professional cop-haters. As results of either intuition of

systematic thinking or a bit of both, they typically come to think that the cops *can't* be put into either of the two categories just described - but then the intuition/thinking breaks down, and they never do come up with a category where they *can* be put.

For someone who understand the nature of liberty, this ambivalence about the police is surely understandable, but it's also unnecessary, for it's possible to have perfectly unambivalent feelings about the "police" - and the root of those feelings of certainty is begun by realizing that there isn't *one* cop-type, there are *two*. Call them your cop-friend and your cop-enemy. Your cop-friend will not only leave you alone as long you're committing no crime, he'll also take people who are/were committing crimes against you; your cop-enemy will not only not protect you, he in fact will assault you and rob you and maybe kill you for perfectly innocent behavior.

Having used "crime" in describing those two cop-types, I should define it. Those who believe that a crime is anything some group of politicians somewhere decided to *label* a crime are wasting their time reading this analysis, for by that definition the cops are *always* good guys (assuming they are earning their pay), for, by definition, they're out there doing terrible things to "criminals", and who could oppose that? Under such a definition life is simpler, for one need do no thinking about the precise nature of what the cops are up to, for we've already *defined* them as being up to anti-criminal things. But life under that definition is also demented and repulsive, for under it a slave state is not only possible, it's assured; it allows the cops (and those political forces which control them) to lock people up who commit an action which is not a "crime" in any sense *except that* those defining the crime-defining don't like it, and it allows them to perpetrate actions which if committed by any *but* people in uniform would be uniformly seen as crimes. No, we need a better definition.

We have one. A person commits a crime when he or she executes an act of aggression against a person who has committed no aggression against him/her, with "aggression" being defined as physical force (or force in its other guise - fraud). This definition simply means that as long as you do not aggress against others, you are not to be locked up for doing some (non-criminal) thing the state doesn't like, nor are you to be robbed of your resources to support people the state likes better than it likes you. The insight which lies behind this standard-among-liberty-folk (but ignored-by-society) definition is that the *identity* of a committer of aggression doesn't matter, and that theft or assault are just as much theft and assault when committed by agents of the state as when committed junkies.

Which brings up back to your cop-friend and your cop-enemy. Everyone agrees that we have cop-friends, for the activities of homicide detectives and bunco squads and robbery details are too well known to overlook; what is less apparent, at least to most members of the general public, is that in a society (like our own) which has been transformed from a relatively free one into a violently socialized one, the law-enforcers will necessarily turn out to be cop-enemies as often as cop-friends. The best cop who saves your life and loses his by protecting from some psychotic killer is counter-balanced by the IRS-terrorist who steals, at gun-point, the majority of your income for distribution to the state's leech-classes. The bunco-squad sergeant who recovers your swindled-away money is balanced by the narc or the FDA enforcer who jails you for unpopular ingestive practices. And so on.

It would be nice to be able to close this analysis with a statement (one which would allow liberty-folk to stop feeling ambivalent about the police) saying whether on *balance* the cops are the friends of liberty (and therefore of all good people) or its enemy. I can't (because it would involve assigning numbers to non-numerical entities), but that doesn't matter; it is enough that we recognize that sometimes they are the best of us, sometimes the worst. To figure out which they are in a particular instance, look beyond the *label* ("police") to the *reality*: What they are *doing* - *preventing* crimes or *committing* them.